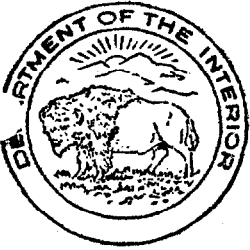


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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1948

MODERN PUBLICITY TECHNIQUES ENLISTED FOR WAR ON RATS

Summarizing the Department of the Interior's recent National Urban Rat Control Campaign, Secretary of the Interior J. A. Krug today declared that modern techniques of publicity were used effectively in the emergency war on rats, to strengthen the more conventional methods of rodent control.

To enlist the public in the campaign the Fish and Wildlife Service forwarded more than four million pieces of literature in bulk shipments to about 650 cities, for distribution within the communities. This material urged citizens to rat proof their buildings, to use rat traps and poisons correctly and to dispose of garbage and trash efficiently.

Circular letters were sent to the mayors of 1,099 cities with populations of 10,000 and over, requesting them to enroll their communities in the Campaign. These circulars emphasized the tremendous damage caused by rats—estimated at two billion dollars annually—that the rodents spread eight deadly diseases; contaminate 200 million bushels of U.S. grain and millions of tons of other foods each year and that rats outnumber the country's human inhabitants.

Trade associations and industrial firms in the rodent control business, trade groups and industrial organizations in the food-handling field, and varied civic associations joined in the battle against rats.

Newspapers, magazines, and radio stations cooperated to enlist the support of all groups in the rat control programs.

Conducted during the second half of fiscal year 1948, the National Urban Rat Control Campaign was financed by \$160,000 allotted to the Fish and Wildlife Service from the President's Emergency Food Conservation Program.

As a result of the Campaign, 831,988 private premises were treated for rat control, nearly twice the number of premises treated during the previous fiscal year. As measured by manpower, the Service increased its rodent control activities 27 percent. During the five months of the Campaign, the Service employed additional expert aid amounting to 4,041 man-days more than the man-days employed for regularly authorized rodent control operations.

Of the 631 cities participating in the Campaign, 62 percent have enacted rat control ordinances or have rat-proofed city property and improved garbage collection and sewage disposal.

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